Gaining from UN Peacekeeping Operations - India & China

What is the issue?

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- Despite troop contributions to UN peacekeeping missions, the returns in UN power play for India have been low.
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- Also, China's grip on UN affairs is increasing to the detriment of India.
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What is UN Peacekeeping?

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- The United Nations Security Council has the power and responsibility to take collective action to maintain international peace and security.
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- It thus authorizes peacekeeping operations to help countries that are conflict ridden and to create conditions for lasting peace.
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What is China's role?

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- In the emerging geopolitical scenario, China is increasingly taking a centre stage in the world affairs.
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- Amidst this, in UN peacekeeping missions, China has become the largest troop contributor among the permanent members of the UNSC.
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- More importantly, China is now the third-largest contributor to the UN's regular budget.
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- And the second-largest contributor to the peacekeeping budget.

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- China’s participation in UN operations offers a low-cost means of demonstrating their commitment to global stability.
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- Also an assertion of its military and economic strength and its quest for great power status.
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- What is more concerning for India is China's greater involvement in selective peace operations with a self-serving motive.
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- E.g. China was against sending UN peacekeepers to Guatemala and Macedonia because they had established diplomatic ties with Taiwan.
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- This is evident of increasing front-lining of China in international affairs via the UN.
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Why is it a concern for India?

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- The UN, especially the UNSC, notwithstanding its charter of considering all countries as equals, functions more in a partisan way.
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- In practice, a nation’s voice is in proportion to what it contributes towards the UN.
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- Notably, troop contributions to peacekeeping alone do not get their due in UN power politics.
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- It is the contribution of funds that matters more for having a powerful say in the decisions and getting pivotal posts in UN missions.
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- Sadly, India’s contribution is below 1%, when compared to China’s around 8% and U.S.’s 20% plus.
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What are India's demands?

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- The current system excludes the troop and police-contributing countries

(T/PCCs) from the process of framing the mandates.
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- Chinese involvement in peacekeeping and its higher funding contributions gives it a role in formulating peacekeeping mandates.
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- On the other hand, India is losing out despite having provided almost 200,000 troops in nearly 50 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions over the past six decades, because of less fund contribution.
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- India thus demands an enhanced role for troops contributing countries in the decision-making process of UN peacekeeping missions.
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- There is also a need to ensure a more effective triangular cooperation between the T/PCCs, Secretariat and Security Council.
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- The cooperation should be enhanced in important policy and doctrinal issues being formulated in the field of peacekeeping.
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- The need is felt more with the increasing complexity of peacekeeping operations as well as with non-state actors becoming major players in many of these conflicts.
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Source: The Hindu

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